

TALES FROM THE CRYPT

THE
MURDER OF



THE
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THE
MURDER OF



FAMOUS 1950s EC COMICS!

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OR



NO. 12
JUNE

TALES



200
27¢
CANADA

FROM THE

CRYPT

FEATURING



THE CRYPT KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE GRINNING MAN



BACK ISSUES!!

THE COMIC YOU HOLD IN YOUR HANDS IS PART OF THE CHRONOLOGICAL, FACSIMILE REPRINTING OF THE FAMOUS (AND INFAMOUS!) EC COMICS LINE OF THE EARLY 1950s! WE STARTED WITH THE FIRST ISSUE OF EACH TITLE AND ARE ON OUR WAY TO THE BITTER END! GET ON THE SANDWAGON, AND FILL IN THE GAPS IN YOUR COLLECTION FROM THIS BACKLIST!!

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	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
1. <i>Chrysomelidae</i>	1	1	1	1	1
2. <i>Curculionidae</i>	1	1	1	1	1
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[illegible]

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! SO YOU'RE BACK FOR MORE, BUT CAN'T GET ENOUGH HORROR, EH? WELL, I'LL GIVE YOU YOUR DIME'S WORTH THIS TIME! HEH! IT'S ME... YOUR HOST... **THE CRYPT-KEEPER!** HEHE! WHAT CHILLER CAN I TELL YOU THAT WILL MAKE YOUR BLOOD RUN COLD AND THE HAIR ON YOUR NECK CRAWL? AHAH! I KNOW JUST THE ONE! THIS IS A REAL SPINE-TWILER! I CALL IT... AFFECTIONATELY...

BARGAIN IN DEATH!



MY STORY HAS ITS BEGINNING ON A COOL OCTOBER EVENING IN 1922? IN THEIR ROOM IN THE DORMITORY OF LOGANWOOD MEDICAL COLLEGE, TWO YOUNG STUDENTS, SIT DEJECTEDLY, THEIR FACES SULKY...

WHAT CAN WE DO, WELL? UNLESS WE RAISE SOME MONEY, WE WON'T BE ABLE TO PAY OUR LABORATORY FEES!

AND WITHOUT THAT, OF COURSE, WE CAN'T CONTINUE WITH OUR STUDIES! DISSECTING THOSE DEADBODIES IS REQUIRED FOR ANATOMY CREDIT!





CORPSE! I DON'T KNOW
STUFF'S GON'T GO
MUCH! THAT'S WHAT
THE LAB TEE COVERS,
YOU KNOW!

YEAH I
KNOW! SAY!
WHAT IF WE
SUPPLIED
OUR OWN
CORPSE?



WOULD YOU
YOU MEAN...

DON'T LOOK
SHOCKED, NO!
IT'S BEEN DONE
BEFORE! WE
JUST DID UP A
FRESH ONE IN
THE TOWN CEM-
ETERY!



STEAL A BODY
FOR A GRAVE?

EITHER THAT
OR WE DON'T
BECOME SUCCESS-
FUL! TAKE YOUR
CHOICE!



HEH, HEH! NOW THAT WE'VE SET SID AND MEL, AND
HEARD THEIR PROBLEM, LET'S LOOK IN ON THE SECOND
SCENE OF OUR BRISKLY LITTLE TRAMP! THIS IS TAKING
PLACE FAR ACROSS TOWN AT ALMOST THE SAME

MOMENT.

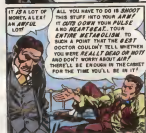
IT'S CRAZY, ALEX!
ABSOLUTELY CRAZY! I
WON'T AGREE TO IT!

BUT IT WILL WORK,
GEORGE! I KNOW!
I SAW WHAT THIS
GUY CAN DO! WE
NEED THE MONEY, DON'T
WE?



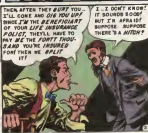
YES! OF COURSE! BUT...
TO GIVE UP EVERY-
THING, START ALL
OVER...

WITH TWENTY THOU-
SAND DOLLARS OF
INSURANCE MONEY!



IT IS A LOT OF
MONEY, ALEX!
AN ANNUAL
LOSS!

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SHOOT
THIS STUFF INTO YOUR ARM!
IT GOES DOWN YOUR PULSE
AND HEARTBEAT. YOUR
ENTIRE METABOLISM TO
SUCH A POINT THAT THE BEST
DOCTOR COULDN'T TELL WHETHER
YOU WERE REALLY DEAD OR NOT!
AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT AIN!
THERE'LL BE ENOUGH IN THE CASKET
FOR THE TIME YOU'LL BE IN IT!



THEN, AFTER THEY BURY YOU...
I'LL COME AND GET YOU UP!
WHEN I'M THE BENEFICIARY
OF YOUR LIFE INSURANCE
POLICY, THEY'LL HAVE TO
PAY ME THE FORTY THOU-
SAND YOU'VE INSURED
FOR! THEN WE SPLIT
IT!

I... I DON'T KNOW!
IT SOUNDS GOOD!
BUT I'M AFRAID!
SUPPOSE, SUPPOSE
THERE'S A KITCH?



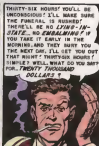
DON'T BE A FOOL, GEORGE! WHAT CAN SO WRONG?

SUPPOSE THE INSURANCE COMPANY SUSPECTS?



HOW CAN THEY? IT WILL LOOK LIKE **HEART-FAILURE!** I'LL BE AT HOME WITH A **PERFECT ALIBI!** NO ONE ELSE HAS ANY **MOTIVE!**

HOW LONG WILL THE **EFFECT** OF THE **DRUG** LAST?



THIRTY-SIX HOURS! YOU'LL BE UNCONSCIOUS! I'LL MAKE SURE THE FUNERAL IS RUSHED! THERE'LL BE NO **LIVING-IN-STATE... NO EMBALMING!** IF YOU TAKE IT EARLY IN THE MORNING, AND THEY BURY YOU THE NEXT DAY, I'LL GET YOU OUT THAT NIGHT! THIRTY-SIX HOURS! SIMPLY? WELL, WHAT DO YOU SAY? FOR...**TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS!**



HHMM! SEEMS LIKE **EVERYBODY'S** GOT PROBLEMS! WELL! LET'S HURRY BACK ACROSS TOWN AND SEE WHAT **JED** AND **MEI** HAVE DECIDED...

ALL RIGHT, WELL! I'LL **DO** IT!

ATRA BOY, **NO!** WE'LL GET OLD GLEN TO HELP US! HE'LL **DO ANYTHING** FOR MONEY!



HEH, HEH! THE PLOT THICKENS, EH, KIDNEST AS FOR ALEX AND GEORGE, SURELY YOU MUST HAVE ANTICIPATED...

I'LL **JUSTICE**, ALEX! BUT IT'S AGAINST MY BETTER JUDGEMENT...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, GEORGE! I'LL TAKE CARE OF **EVERYTHING!** HERE'S THE HYPODERMIC AND THE **DRUG!** TAKE A **FULL SHOT!**



AND FOR **BOB'S** SAKE, SET RID OF THE BOTTLE AND NEEDLE BEFORE THE STUFF TAKES EFFECT! YOU'LL HAVE ABOUT **TEN MINUTES!**

I'LL BE CAREFUL, ALEX! DON'T WORRY!



SO THAT'S THE SITUATION, FIENDES! LIKE IT? GOOD! NOW FOR THE COMPLICATIONS! READY? HERE GOES! THE NEXT MORNING, GEORGE'S LANDLADY DISCOVERS HIS BODY...

EEEE

A DOCTOR IS BURNED BY THE HYSTERICAL WOMAN.

THIS MAN IS DEAD? LOOKS LIKE HEART-FAILURE? MUST HAVE HAPPENED EARLY THIS MORNING? DID HE HAVE ANY RELATIVES?

NO! ONLY A FRIEND? I'LL DO FOR HIM?



ALEX RECEIVES THE BAD NEWS...

WHAT? GEORGE... DEAD? GOOD LORD, WHAT A SHOCK! I'D BETTER COME BACK WITH YOU AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS!

SOR... SOR? HE... HE WAS SUCH A GOOD MAN? SUCH A GOOD MAN?



Alex ARRANGES GEORGE'S FUNERAL.

BUT... IT'S CUSTOMARY TO WAIT SEVERAL DAYS...

NO! GEORGE WOULDN'T HAVE WANTED IT THAT WAY! THE FUNERAL WILL BE HELD TOMORROW... IN THE AFTERNOON!



THAT EVENING, IN THEIR DOWN-PORT ROOM.

LOOK, SID? WE'RE IN LUCK! SOME FOLKS SAID GEORGE DIED THIS MORNING? THEY'RE BURYING HIM TOMORROW AFTERNOON!

COME! LET'S GO SEE CLEM! WE'LL DIG UP THE BODY TOMORROW NIGHT!



SID AND MEL FIND CLEM, THE BATHEN STUPID COLLEGE HANDY-MAN, AND EXPLAIN THEIR PLAN.

WAL... I DUNNO, FELLERS! WHEN UP A CORPSE? THAT'S kinda SCARY BUSINESS!

WE'LL MAKE IT WORTH YOUR WHILE, CLEM! SAY... FIVE DOLLARS?



WAL... FIVE DOLLARS... I WANT!

GOOD! MEET US HERE TOMORROW NIGHT!

BRING THE TOOLS!



THE NEXT DAY, TOWARD LATE AFTERNOON, GEORGE, UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE DRUG... IS 'Laid TO REST'...

HE WAS... A GOOD MAN!

LOWER THE COFFIN!



AFTER GEORGE'S CASKET IS LOWERED INTO THE TAWNING BLACK PIT, THE GRAVE-DIGGERS STOP FOR-
WARD...



FROM A DISTANCE, ALEX, GEORGE’S BEST FRIEND AND BENEFICIARY, SMILES AS THE SOFT CRAWLING EARTH IS SHOVELLED INTO GEORGE’S GRAVE...



WHEN ALEX RETURNS TO HIS ROOMING HOUSE, A STRANGER IS WAITING FOR HIM...

MY NAME IS FORTNEY. I’M FROM COSMOPOLITAN LIFE! ARE YOU ALEX LAWRENCE?



YOU ARE THE BENEFICIARY NAMED IN THE FORTY-THOUSAND DOLLAR POLICY OF THE RECENTLY DECEASED GEORGE ARKMAN...



SO WE’VE EXAMINED THE CERTIFICATE OF DEATH! EVERY-
THING SEEMS TO BE IN ORDER!

WELL! WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE ME ABOUT, THEN?



WHY, TO PRESENT YOU WITH YOUR CASH, SISTER LAWRENCE! HERE YOU ARE!



AS DARKNESS BLANKETS THE TOWN AND THE LITTLE DRAB-LOOKING CEMETERY, ALEX LAWRENCE HASTILY RACKS...



MEANWHILE, DEEP DOWN UNDER THE MOLEY BLACK EARTH IN THE CEMETERY, SOMETHING STIRRS/GEORGE IS COMING TO...



GEORGE REACHES UP TO THE SATIN-LINED LID OF HIS UNDERGROUND PRISON...



AT THAT MOMENT, ALEX STANDS ON A USED-CAR LOT, SURVEYING A SHINY BLUE CONVERTIBLE...



LATER THAT NIGHT, AS GEORGE LIES BURIED SIX FEET BELOW THE CEMETERY'S GRAVESTONE REDECKED SURFACE...



SLOWLY, THE LID OF THE DESERTED CEMETERY SPRINGS OPEN, ITS RUSTED HINGES SCREAMING IN PROTEST AS THREE FIGURES ENTER...



3. FREELY, SID AND MEL, THE TWO MEDICAL STUDENTS, MAKE THEIR WAY ACROSS THE GRAVE-MOUNDED TO THE FRESH ONE...



DOWN BELOW, GEORGE HEARS A MUFFLED THUD, AS CLEM'S SPADE CUTS INTO THE DARK SOIL.

IT...IT...MUST...BE...ALEX!
HURRY! ALEX! HURRY!
I'M...SUFFOCATING!



LITTLE BY LITTLE, CLEM'S SPADE BOUNCES OUT AN EVER DEEPENING HOLE AS THE MINUTES TICK BY...

JUST A LITTLE DEEPER,
CLEM! JUST A LITTLE...

UH-HUH?

HURRY...ALEX!
HURRY...UP!
SASP...



FAR ACROSS TOWN, THE MOTOR OF THE BLUE CONVERTIBLE HUMS AS ALEX, AT THE WHEEL, GUIDES IT OUT OF THE LOT...

GOOD LUCK, SIR!
HOPE YOU LIKE
THE BUS...

YEAH? THANKS?



THE HOLLOW ROOM OF CLEM'S SPADE STRIKING THE COFFIN ECHOES ACROSS THE DESERTED CEMETERY

HURRY! WHY OPEN
THE LID?

HERE! HERE'S A
CROW-BAR!

UH-HUH?



CLEM SLIPS THE SHARP EDGE OF THE CROW-BAR UNDER THE LID AND PRESSED DOWN! THE COFFIN SHUDDERS... THEN THE LID GOES AWAY.

IT'S COMING LOOSE! LIFT IT OFF,
CLEM!

UH-HUH?



GEORGE, GASPING FOR AIR, COVERED WITH PERSPIRATION, IS BOLT UPRIGHT IN THE COFFIN! CLEM'S EYES WIDEN... AS HE SCREAMS...

YAAAAAHHHHH!

GOOD LORD!



ALEX, IN HIS NEW RED SHINY BLUE CONVERTIBLE, IS HITTING EIGHTY AS HE LEAVES TOWN ON THE ROAD THAT SNIKTS THE CEMETERY...



HEH, HEH! HOPE YOU'RE COMFORTABLE IN THERE, GEORGE!

SUDDENLY, TWO FIGURES LOOM UP BEFORE HIM... SCAMPERING ALONG THE ROAD...



LOOK OUT!

ALEX SWERVES TO AVOID HITTING THE FRIGHTENED, RACING STUDENTS! THE CAR HURTLES ACROSS THE ROAD TOWARD THE CEMETERY FENCE...



EEEEAAAAAAGH!

LATER, IN A DARK CORNER OF A LOCAL BAR, SID AND MEL COMPOSE THEMSELVES WITH SEVERAL SHOTS OF HARD LIQUOR...



LORE, MEL! IF I DON'T SEE IT WITH MY OWN EYES, I WOULDN'T HAVE BELIEVED IT! THAT GORPHE ACTUALLY BAT UP!

AND THAT POOR GUY IN THE CONVERTIBLE? HE TRIED TO AVOID HITTING SID AND KILLED HIMSELF!

FINALLY, SID AND MEL RETURN TO THEIR ROOM AS THEY OPEN THE DOOR...



THE LESS SAID ABOUT TONIGHT, THE BETTER

DEE? I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO GLEN?

HERE I WAS! I BEEN WAITIN' ON THAT!



GLEN! THAT'LL BE FIVE BUCKS, PLEASE! THAT'S WHAT YUH PROVIDED ME FOR THE BODY!

GOOD LORD, SID? LOOK!

THE TWO MEDICAL STUDENTS STARE IN HORROR AT THE PROSTRAKE BODY OF GEORGE ARKMAN STRETCHED OUT ON THE FLOOR... ITS HEAD CRUSHED FROM THE BLOW OF A CROW BAR



HEH, HEH! YEP! OLD GLEN REALLY **GAVE AROGAS**... BY GEORGE! AND SID AND MEL HAVE THE **STIFF** THEY NEEDED! AS FOR ALEX... WELL... HE'S PRETTY BLUE... FROM CAR PAINT! THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET ALL WRAPPED UP IN SOMETHING! NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO MY FELLOW GHOULBROTHER, THE NIGHT-KEEPER, WHO'S WRITING TO RELATE **ANY** TERROR-TALES! SEE YOU LATER WITH INFORMATION ON HOW TO OBTAIN BACK ISSUES FROM ME! IT'S ALL COVERED IN MY COLUMN, **THE GRIFF-KEEPER'S CORNER!**



THE VAULT OF HORROR!

NEVER BEEN HYPNOTIZED? NO? THEN YOU'LL LIKE THE CHILLING FARM I'M ABOUT TO SPIN! IT CONCERNS A HYPNOTIST... HIS WIFE... AND... WELL, WHY NOT COME INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR... PULL UP THAT COFFIN... SIT YOURSELF UPON ITS WORMY LID... AND LISTEN! YOU ALL KNOW WHO I AM! YES! THE VAULT-KEEPER! READY? THEN, I'LL BEGIN! I CALL THIS HORROR TALE...

ANTS IN HER TRANCE!



THE GUESTS AT THE DINNER PARTY TURNED AS THEIR HEALTHY HOSTESS, MRS JUSTINE FLEETWOOD, CLAPPED HER HANDS FOR ATTENTION! BEHIND HER STOOD A STRIKING DARK-HAIRED MAN WITH BLACK PIERCING EYES! BESIDE HIM, A NERVOUS FAIR-LOOKING WOMAN FIDGETED WITH HER NECKLACE.

ALL RIGHT, MY FRIENDS! IF I CAN HAVE YOUR ATTENTION, I HAVE A SURPRISE FOR YOU ALL! I'VE INVITED A FAMOUS PERSON TO ENTERTAIN... SOMEONE I'M SURE YOU'VE ALL HEARD ABOUT! THIS... IS LEOPOLD MONETTI...

NOW EXCITING! HE'S THE AMAZING HYPNOTIST!



LEOPOLD MONETTI STEPPED FORWARD AND BOWED GRACEFULLY! THEN HE TURNED TO THE PALE THIN WOMAN AT HIS SIDE...

THIS IS MY WIFE...EVETTE! TONIGHT, AT YOUR CHARMING HOSTESS'S REQUEST, I WILL PRESENT FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT A DEMONSTRATION OF THE ASTOUNDING ART OF HYPNOTISM!

WILL YOU ALL PLEASE FIND SEATS?



THE GUESTS SCURRIED ABOUT CHANGING CHAIRS TO AND FRO UNTIL THEY WERE ALL SEATED BEFORE THE HYPNOTIST AND HIS WIFE...

NOW THAT YOU ARE SETTLED I WILL BEGIN! MY WIFE HERE WILL BE MY SUBJECT IN THIS DEMONSTRATION! FIRST, I WILL PLACE HER INTO A **HYPNOTIC TRANCE!** ONCE PLACED UNDER THIS SPELL, SHE WILL OBEY MY EVERY WISH! ONLY AFTER I UTTER THE WORDS **'SNAP OUT OF IT!'** WILL SHE BE REVIVED!



LEOPOLD TURNED TO HIS PALE WIFE AND PASSED HIS HANDS OVER HER FACE SEVERAL TIMES! THEN HE BEGAN TO STARE INTO HER EYES, WHILE MURMURING INCOHERENT PHRASES! SOON, EVETTE'S EYES GLAZED...HER BODY BECAME RIGID...



THERE! EVETTE IS NOW IN A HYPNOTIC TRANCE! HER WILL IS MINE TO COMMAND!

THE MIND IS A WONDERFUL THING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! IT HAS FULL CONTROL OVER EVERY PART OF THE BODY! NORMALLY, WE DO NOT FULLY USE THE POWERS OF THE MIND! BUT, UNDER HYPNOTISM, THESE POWERS ARE BROUGHT INTO PLAY! FOR EXAMPLE...



MONETTI TURNED TO HIS WIFE



EVETTE! GRIN!

EVETTE'S HAKEN FEATURES SAGGED! SHE SIGHED PITIFULLY AND THEN BEGAN TO WHIMPER! HER EYES FILLED WITH TEARS! THEY SPILLED OVER HER EYELIDS AND RAN DOWN HER CHEEKS...



YOU SEE! AT MY COMMAND, SHE INSTANTLY GRIEFS!

A STUNNING!

INCREDIBLE!

MONETTI TURNED TO HIS WIFE ONCE AGAIN...



EVETTE! PERSPIRE!

SMALL BEADS OF PERSPIRATION GUSTED FROM THE PORES IN EYETTE'S BALLYHOO FACE! SOON HER ENTIRE COUNTERTANCE WAS SHIMMING WITH...

NO... AT MY WORD! PERSPIRATION?

UNBELIEVABLE!

FANTASTIC!



AND NOW, FOR MY FINAL DEMONSTRATION! IS THERE ONE AMONG YOU WHO IS EITHER A PHYSICIAN OR HAS A KNOWLEDGE OF MEDICINE?

I WAS A NURSE!



GOOD! WILL YOU WHOLLY COME UP! I AM GOING TO DO SOMETHING THAT SCIENCE CLAIMS IS IMPOSSIBLE! I AM GOING TO COMMAND EYETTE TO STOP HER HEART FROM BEATING!

WHAT? I DON'T BELIEVE IT!



THE LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN WHO HAD VOLUNTEERED CAME UP TO THE HYPNOTIST AND HIS ENTHRALLLED WIFE...

KINDLY FEEL MY WIFE'S PULSE, IF YOU WILL!

I... I FEEL IT! IT'S RAPID... STRONG...



DO NOT BE ALARMED, YOUNG LADY! I HAVE MERELY TO UTTER THE WORDS 'SNAP OUT OF IT' AND MY WIFE WILL BE RELEASED FROM HER HYPNOTIC TRANCE AND HER HEART WILL BEAT ONCE MORE!

WELL, SNAP IT THEN FOR GOD'S SAKE! HURRY!



ALL RIGHT, EYETTE! STOP YOUR HEART!

SNAP! HER PULSE! IT'S STOPPED! SHE'S DEAD!



SNAP OUT OF IT, EYETTE!

WOMAN! WHERE AM I... OH...

THANK THE LORD!



THE COLOR RETURNED TO EYETTE'S CHEEKS AND SHE MOVED ABOUT THE GUESTS CHATTING SATISFIEDLY! MEANWHILE, LEOPOLD HAD ENBADED HIS VOLUNTARY ASSISTANT IN CONVERSATION...

YOU SEEMED WORRIED FOR A WHILE, MISS... MISS...

APPLETON! SELMA APPLETON! YES! I WAS!

YOU WERE IMPRESSED, THEN, MISS APPLETON? IT IS... MISS!

YES! IT'S MISS APPLETON! OH, I WAS IMPRESSED! YET! YOU'RE WONDERFUL!

PERHAPS I CAN SEE YOU TOMORROW SAT FOR LUNCH! WE CAN TALK FURTHER... ON HYPNOTISM!

OH, I'D BE DELIGHTED! MAKE IT TWELVE-THIRTY? THE BLUE CANDLE?

THE NEXT DAY, SELMA APPLETON MET LEOPOLD MORETTI FOR LUNCH! IN THE DIMNESS OF THE CANDLE-LIT CAFE... HIS EYES BORED INTO HER'S AS HE CONFESSED...

I HAD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, SELMA! LAST NIGHT, WHEN I FIRST SAW YOU... I KNEW IMMEDIATELY! IT TOOK ONLY A MOMENT...

P... PLEASE, LEOPOLD! SOMEONE WILL SEE US!

LET THEM! I MUST TELL YOU! I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU! YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL! EXCITING! DESIRABLE! I FELL IN LOVE WITH YOU THE MOMENT I SAW YOU!

BUT, LEOPOLD! YOUR WIFE! YOU... YOU'RE MARRIED!

AND IF I WERE NOT MARRIED? WOULD YOU CONSIDER...?

I... I DON'T KNOW! I... I LIKE YOU! I... THANK SO! YES! I THINK I WOULD!

AND SO, A SECRET LOVE AFFAIR BETWEEN SELMA AND LEOPOLD BEGAN! THEY SAW EACH OTHER OFTEN AFTER THAT! FINALLY... ONE NIGHT, AT SELMA'S APARTMENT...

IT CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS, LEO! THIS MEETING SECRETLY, BEHIND LOCKED DOORS... IN DARK STREETS...

WHAT CAN I DO, SELMA? EYETTE WOULD NEVER GIVE ME A DIVORCE!

SILMA SLIPPED DOWN BESIDE LEOPOLD THERE WAS A WILD GLEAM IN HER EYES.

IF...IF SHE WERE DEAD, LEO, WE COULD BE MARRIED!

YOU MEAN... KILL HER?



IT COULD LOOK LIKE A NATURAL DEATH! YOU REMEMBER HOW WE MET? YOU WERE DEMONSTRATING HOW YOU COULD COMMAND EVELLE TO STOP HER HEART...

YOU WERE THE ONE WHO FELT HER PULSE! YOU THOUGHT SHE WAS DEAD!



EXACTLY! ANY DOCTOR WOULD HAVE THOUGHT SO! YOU REMEMBER YOU ASSURED ME...

I TOLD YOU THAT THE WORDS 'SNAP OUT OF IT' WOULD REVIVE HER! THEY ALWAYS DO! WE'VE USED THE SAME OATH FOR YEARS!



SUPPOSE YOU USED OTHER WORDS! SUPPOSE YOU 'FAILED' TO REVIVE HER!

SHE'D BE DEAD!



AND YOU'D BE FREE! THE POLICE WOULD CALL IT AN UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT! THEY COULDN'T PROVE INTENT! YOU'D BE BROKE-HEARTED!

YES! VERY! I'LL DO IT, SILMA!



THE NEXT NIGHT, LEOPOLD AND EVELLE HAD AN ENGAGEMENT TO DEMONSTRATE HYPNOTISM! LEOPOLD HAD MADE UP HIS MIND...

YES! I'LL FEEL HER PULSE! IT'S VERY STRONG!

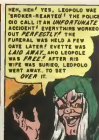
ALL RIGHT, EVELLE! STOP YOUR HEART!



GOOD LORD! HER PULSE HAS STOPPED! WAKE HER UP, MAN!

WAKE UP, EVELLE! OR... I SAID WAKE UP, EVELLE!





SELMA BEGAN TO RAVE! HER
SCREAMING VOICE ECHOED
ACROSS THE HEADSTONES...

WE'RE MURDERERS!
MURDERERS!
MURDERERS!

THANK GOD
THE PLACE
IS DESERTED!
NO ONE WILL
HEAR HERE!

LEOPOLD GRABBED SELMA'S
SHOULDERS! HE SHOOK HER
FURIOUSLY...

SNAP OUT OF IT!
YOU'RE HYSTERICAL!

SOR...
SOR...

THEN THEY TURNED TO GO! AS THEY
MADE THEIR WAY ACROSS THE ROWS OF
GRAVES, A SMALL FIGURE APPEARED IN
THE MOON BEHIND EYETTE'S TOMB-
STONE! THE GRAVE WAS CRACKING
OPEN!

SOR... SOR... IF YOU WERE
ALIVE, SELMA,
WE SHOULDN'T
HAVE COME!

A ROTTED HAMBLECRABLING AND FOUL SMELLING
REACHED UP INTO THE GATHERING TWILIGHT!
LEOPOLD AND SELMA WERE JUST DISAPPEARING INTO
THE DARK...

IT'S JUST THAT I THOUGHT
IT WOULD LOOK GOOD! I
DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD
BREAK YOU UP LIKE
THAT!

LEOPOLD AND SELMA REACHED THE CEMETERY GATE!
IT TOWERED ABOVE THEM... RISING TWELVE FEET INTO
THE FALLING DARKNESS... ENDING AT THE TOP IN RAZOR-
SHARP SPIRES...

LEOPOLD! THE
GATE!

GOOD LORD! IT'S
LOOKED! CHAINED...
AND LOCKED!

SUDDENLY THERE WAS A SOUND
BEHIND THE TRAPPED COUPLE!
THE RAUSSEATING OODOR OF DECAY
AND PUTRESCENCE BURNED THEIR
NOSTRILS! THEY TURNED...

OH, MY EYETTE!
GOD!

THE MASSOT-COVERED BLIND
THING LUMBERED TOWARD THEM!
BITS OF ROTTED FLESH FELL
FROM ITS CHALKY BONES! GLOBS
OF GRAVE YARD EARTH SLIPPED
FROM ITS MOLDY CLOTHES! IT
REACHED OUT A DECAYED HAND
TOWARD THEM... PASSING IT
BEFORE THEIR PALED FACES.

YAAAAAAH! EYETTE!

WELL, WHEN THEY FOUND SELMA AND
LED THE NEXT MORNING! FUNNY
THING! THERE WASN'T A MARK ON
EITHER OF THEM! THE GARDENER
SAID IT LOOKED LIKE HEART-
FAILURE! THEIR EYES WERE
BULGING OUT OF THEIR SOCKETS
THOUGH! HE SAID IT WAS AS IF
THEY'D BEEN HYPOTHETIZED! HEN,
HEN! WELL! WE KNOW DIFFERENT.
BUT A BETTER NAME FOR IT WOULD
BE "CORPSENTIZED"! OH, BY THE
WAY! FOUR EYES WILL BULGE FROM
THEIR SOCKETS WHEN YOU SEE BACK
GARDEN! THE GRIFF-KEEPER'S
CORNER, WHICH
FOLLOWS THE
TEXT, TELLS YOU
HOW TO GET
YOURSELF!





THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Gappi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear "CRYPTY" (Crypt-Keeper)

I know your nickname is "CRYPTY" I wanted to say that I loved the story "I repeat!" in VALLEY 10 (I'm not writing good because I'm writing with a PEN THAT DOESN'T HAVE INK) I loved the line when Marty was all in the story stuff and says "IT IS LIKE FLY PAPER!" I imagined Marty's voice like a New Orleans type

Ramiro J. Roman

Glendale, CA

But, y'all... Get some ink, my old eyes aren't what they used to be!

—CK

Do you and the Vault-Keeper ever fight? Sincerely,

Chad J. Ben

Peaceflow City, GA

Sure, we fight—we fight The Old Witch!

—OW

It's me, DARK DIMON who was the Crypt-Keeper before you? Do you have to pay taxes and how old are you?

Dark Deman

address unknown

I am the original Keeper! None authentic without this signature: <C I I am exempt from death, and I am exempt from taxes! Eat your heart out!

—CK

I'm an average-sized fat who loves your stories as old my dad when he was a kid. "Judy, You're Not Yourself Today" definitely ruled! That was the weirdest story ever written. Who wrote it? Do you have any background on it? I also read the one about the insane class kids ending up with epilepsy. Who's the probe who wrote that one? It was cool and ruled, too. Another one that ruled was the one with the poor sister and her brother who turns into glop. That one was so grim it made Kafka look like the Dark Club. Other than EC I like the early early SPIDERMAN comics. PLASTICMAN is also cool! But if I had to have one thing to say, it would be, "Judy, You're Not Yourself Today" ruled! As does the Crypt-Keeper. He's boss and George!

Nat Hirsch

Labadie, CT

And, I'm gone, best! Let's see—we're into the second year, the art is by Wood with no particular reason to believe Harrison was involved; an art excuse Feldstein wrote the script & like the psychic angle is less mechanistic than lots of Feldstein. —CK

How you been hanging? Probably at the end of a rope, ha, ha. You can print my address

Adam Griesbaum

4871 Cleveland RD
Brookline, OH 44111

Yes, ha-ha. I get axes for you; when at the end of your rope, keep your trap (dear) shut! —CK

"ABRA CADAVEN"

I just got issue #10, and you guys sure didn't disappoint me.

"Drawn And Quartered!" Excellent! Oh, and in your painting at the beginning, isn't that the werewolf from "By The Fright Of The Silvery Moon" in the upper right-hand corner? "The Borrowed Body" Good plot, but not as well carried-out as I would have expected "Within Burial Mound" As much as I hate to say it, I could not get into

this story. This was the first EC story I've ever seen without at least one exclamation point. After reading it, I can understand why "Theatrical Pluff" had as good as "Drawn And Quartered!", but excellent just the same.

As for "Abra Cadaver," it's about a doctor whose career is ruined when his brother's cruel practical joke gives him a heart attack. He gets back at his brother by killing him and giving him a voodoo drug to keep his brain alive. He then pretends to cut his brother's brain out as a practical joke. The joke gives the brother a heart attack, and kills him. So, can ya ID it for me? Keep printing my address.

Myron James

RR 4 BOX 141
Rockville, IN 47872

I don't have to ID it, "issues..."

—CK

About the new CRYPT movie, "Damon Knight" see this film! I give it two (severed) thumbs up!

I wish people would stop complaining about the HBO show. TV and comics are two different mediums and so of course the stories have to be a little different. True, the show goes too far sometimes, but for the most part, I think it is worthy of its title. I am certain that you and the HBO CK are the same, after all, if you were an old man in the '70s, by now you would probably be a rotting corpse.

Finally, I have a helpful note for Myron James, who asked in which issue the story "Abra Cadaver" could be found. You noticed that you never ran a story with that title. This is because the story was originally called "Dead Right!" HBO had already used that title with a completely different story. They obviously wanted to use the original story later on, so they changed the title to "Abra Cadaver." You can print my address.

David Lowery II

1018 Grossa PT
Irving, TX 75061

Now the question is, what is the plot of the HBO "Dead Right?" (Our "Dead Right" ran in CRYPT #37—was it our #21.) —CK

MORE HBO STUFF

Are the covers you use now the same covers that were used on the original comics? Which SHOCK issue will (or has) reprinted "Cannon Death"? I see that one on HBO and loved it and would like to read it.

Tyler Compton

Polsom, CA

Yup, original covers. You'll find "Cannon Death" in SHOCK 5, which is available from us as a back issue (art by the great Reed Crandall). —CK

NEXT ISSUE



I always tape your TV show. My dad loves it and so do I. I watched the Santa Claus one on Saturday night, I loved it. I want that one to come on every Saturday night.

Tiffany Wise

Stafford, VA

And on tape, it sent

—CK

There was a "Crypt" episode with Larry (L.A. Law) Drake about an escaped mental patient dressed as Santa Claus who terrorizes a winter cabin, which magazine is it in? There was an episode starring Lou Diamond Phillips and Prescilla Presley called "Cl a Night That Ends Well" where can I find it? Why aren't these "Crypt" in on video? I have to watch the creepy re-hrns that are toned down. Finally, why is the case show going off? I saw a preview for it in a magazine.

James C. Puckett

Houston, TX

I've been assuming the bogus Santa is from "....And All Through the House....", VAULT #38 (but is our VAULT #4) and "On a Trail" will be in CRYPT #34 (our CRYPT #8, but also in 84-pg RCP CRYPT #2 available now). The other questions are for order heads than mine.

—CK

I have CRYPT comics and I watch your show on HBO and FOX, but I like the show on HBO better because they don't leave the good parts out.

Jack Comer, age 12

St Charles MO

Makes them kinda creepy, do you think? Or, does it make them more elderly entertaining?

—CK

I am very excited about the HBO "Tales from the Crypt" season finale that airs on February 15. "You, Murderer." It was a brilliant idea to have Humphrey Bogart "resurrected" for it.

My favorite episodes of your show are "Well Cooled Hems" and "The Thing from the Grave." Please print my address.

E Grand CYN LH

Chad Rushkoff (OK, I)

Connet, NY 11727

I use a lot of ideas on computer "resurrections" at least the producers of TV's "Crypt" know the significance of the images they'd be tampering with. Better than their soft drink guys.

—CK

I have collected CRYPT Volume 1 and 2. If you don't really like The Vault-Keeper and The Old Witch why do you let those monsters be in your comic books? Please print my address. I would like to have a pen pal.

Alexander Onosco

10501 Sam McQuinn
South Gate, CA 90280

I look as good by comparison!

—CK

I love your stories. Me and my big brother collect your comics. I would like a pen pal.

Carole Drake

681 E Garden RD
Winland NJ

CRYPT #10 was awesome! "Drawn and Quartered" was the best story in the mag. "The Borrowed Body" made no sense to me—how do they switch bodies? "Indian Burial Mound" was the classic plot: man does something mean and dies for it. "Political Pull" was exciting, but a little predictable. Please print my address.

Brandon Hendrix

POB 117
Broken Bow OK 74726

I read your comics and watch your shows. I enjoy the blood, gore and murder. I enjoy drawing comics of my own. I have very few friends but the friends I have love CRYPT. Could I be in your fan club?

Dustin (Crypt Jr) Price

Coushatta, LA

Three of the most recent fan-groups are: HORROR FROM THE CRYPT OF FLAAR, Ed Ivy DR, Mahwah, NJ 07447; THE EC REGISTER, Abner Dean Productions,

8801 Atlantic AV, Margate City, NJ 08402 and THE INTERNATIONAL E.C. FAN CLUB, 6847 Calypso ST, Philadelphia, PA 19120.

—CK

Do you have Crypt FOX? If you do give me some or tell me where they are.

Greg Miller, age 8

Reisterstown MD

I had the chicken-POSS case. Didn't like it; all that scurrying (dark those chickens!). Ma, you got me. But I show up in the darndest places. Keep looking!

—CK

What up? I was in New York last night around 11:00 and I saw the comic store and I walked out with the first 3 issues just like that. What kind of music do you like?

Keith Diphick

Upper Merionide, NJ

I assume you paid for those comics before anything! Music is my sers to the ringing of a cash register when you buy EC comics!

—CK

I saw the "Tales from the Crypt: Demon Knight" movie last week. It was horrible. Terrifying, gruesome, disgusting, and nightmare-inducing. I loved it! Please print my address, I would like to hear from other TFC fans.

Garret S. Haeberl, age 22

816 W McClary

Pearle, IL 61804-3380

[Re: the CRYPT #1 look]. What about the wrinkles? Hey, wanna make something of it? Not long 'n prosper.

Carl "Crypt" Howe

Morton IL

All I'm saying is if I had awf wrinkles, I would make a whole "Weather Old Witch"!

—CK

Why don't you wear your hood like everyone else?

Mark Passafium

Union, NY

Get not hood, get not hat, get no shoulders, get no feet. Get no neck, get no chest, so depressed, my robe is blue! (Am I you sorry you asked?)

—CK

Only getting one EC comic each month wasn't enough. So I decided to subscribe to your others! Are you going to have new stories beside reprints? Do you need help with them. I am your man. Print address, I would like a Crypt pen pal.

Zac Gale

2324 Willard ST

Saginaw MI 48602

No place for new material. Be sure your pen has ink (see R. Roman, above).

—CK

NEXT ISSUE



I have sat quietly in my dark, lonely corner since the *Gladiators* reprint era. I was content with the EC comics until now. It's a sad thing, but I can't stand it any longer. Coming out of the dark, I have come to display just how angry I am at the appalling letters you other fans write about a dirty game they play. For everyone should know that I am your one and only #1 fan. I bow at your feet and am at your service. Now that I've let the world know this, I can crawl back to my dark corner and die. Don't anybody dare challenge me! Thank you.

Kristian-Moscow

Whitfield, NJ

ANOTHER MEDIUM HEARD FROM

I have a "Tales from the Crypt" audio tape called "Have a Scary Little Christmas!"

What issue will "Auntie" (it's Cool Inside!) appear in? I can't find your cards at any store. I like the story "Island Burial Mound" (CRYPT 10). And please print my address.

Patrick Burkett

422 S. 22nd ST

Tampa, FL 33603

"Auntie" is in CRYPT #30—will be CRYPT 14 again soon. (How do you get to be Anti-social? Certainly don't be Uncle "Legisl." Well, I like the money.) Get our cards from us, \$1.50 per pack apd.

—CR

THEIR FAVE STORIES

I don't usually read comic books, but I couldn't resist checking [yours] out. My favorite story was "Drum and Quartered." Please print my address so that pen pals can write to me. I'm a slightly morbid 16 year old girl and a junior in high school. You're pretty cool for a dead guy, CW!

Jocelyn Spitzer

1908 Rugby Rd

Chenango, IL 61621

"Well-Cooked Hens!" Jack Davis has some real talent. Very good and I would recommend it. "Madam Bluebeard" One of the best stories I have ever read. "Return" Creepy in a way. "Horror Head" is OK. One of the worst stories I ever read. "Lower Berth" Interesting story with a surprise ending. "This Trick I Kill You" Kind of boring in the beginning, but then it got better. "The Switch" Another good one by the Crypt-Keeper.

Peter Koppeler age 11

Reynolds, NY

My favorite stories are "Lower Berth", (CRYPT 10), "Scared to Death", "Sleep! You're Killing Me!" (CRYPT 13), and "Taint the Meat, Rip the Humanity!" (CRYPT 10). Tell The Vault-Keeper that I like "Pearly to Dead" (CRYPT 14). Tell The Old Witch that I like the tale "Poetic Justice" (HAUNT 12).

Mika-Lewenstein age 9½

Newton, MA

One of my favorite stories is "Death's Turn", CRYPT #8. You have my permission to print my address so I can have pen pals.

Orlando Garcia

1728 W. Superior

Chicago, IL 60622

"Madness at Manderville" in CRYPT 2 and "Bats in my Berth" in CRYPT 8. Please don't chop this letter.

Alexis A. Rabinov

Detroit, MI

My favorite comic stories are "Brieholder" and "Dying to Lose Weight" (VAULT 7), "Caddy Lost His Head" (VAULT 6), "Scared to Death" (CRYPT 8) and "The Story of Death" (HAUNT 8). My favorite ones on TV are "The Tuffies" ("On a Dead Man's Chest" HAUNT 12) and "What's Cooking, Doc?" ("What's Cooking?" HAUNT 12).

Matt Smith

Ulrich, NY

SNIP It also heard from:

S. Adams (Happy Birthday!)
John Brown
Dwayne L. Heath
Carl Platano
Brandon G'Donnell
Paul O'Leary
Name unknown

Edison, NJ
Harrison, NJ
Dearborn HTS, MI
Laredo, TX
Pittsburgh, PA
Needham, MA
Gays, IL



WOW!

LOOK AT THIS!

In the 70s, East Coast Comics reprinted 12 EC comics in facsimile form. Certain issues have been harder to get for years now. We have found an EXTREMELY LIMITED quantity of their 3rd thru 10th issues. In addition, issues 11 and 12 are listed here at the same price currently on our mail order form.

We particularly recommend #8, that issue of TWO-PISTED TALES is one of the greatest individual comic books of all time!

When ordering please identify as EAST COAST ISSUE # (for example, EAST COAST #3). Add \$5. per order S&H (\$10. outside US).

#3 (SHOCK #12) #4 (HAUNT #12)
#5 (WEIRD FANTASY #13) #6 (CRIME #28)
#7 (VAULT #26) #10 (HAUNT #23)
#8 (TWO-PISTED #34)

The above are \$15. each.

#11 (WEIRD SCIENCE "#12") #11
#12 (SHOCK #2)

The above are \$10. each.

Also available this month are reprint SCIENCE and SPOOK. Watch for HAUNT, WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-PISTED next month. Don't forget HAUNT, FRONTLINE COMICS 7 and 8, and 9. Get them at your local comic book shop or 800-828-8888 (ask our ad in this month for details).

S&H: ISSUES, CRYPT #1, \$2 each (subject to availability). All others up thru issue #8, \$1 \$8 each. Issues #9 and up \$2 each. Add \$5 per order (\$10 outside US) for S&H.

Write to:
CRYPT
RUEB COCHRAN
POB 481
WEST PLAINS MO 65755

THIS COMIC REPRINTS
TALES FROM THE CRYPT "#32" (#12, FEB/MAR 82)

COVER by Al Feldstein
"Bargain in Death"
"Arts in Her Trance"
"A Conny Story"
"The Ventriloquist's Dummy!"

Jack Davis
Joe Orlando
Jack Korman
Graham Ingels

We warrant letters of interest. We cannot promise to acknowledge letters on a regular basis. We will try to answer them as soon as possible. We cannot accept responsibility for any loss of mail or for any damage to property. We cannot accept responsibility for any loss of mail or for any damage to property. We cannot accept responsibility for any loss of mail or for any damage to property.

YOU'LL SHUDDER OVER THIS ONE
EVEN THOUGH YOU MIGHT CALL IT ...

A-CORNY STORY



ARNOLD EVERETTE STRODE DOWN THE AISLE BETWEEN THE ROWS OF DESKS THAT LINED HIS OFFICE, GLANCING FROM ONE TO THE OTHER. HE SMILED TO HIMSELF AS HE NOTED THE OCCUPANT OF EACH. YES! THINGS WERE WORKING OUT FINE. THERE WAS ONLY ONE MAN LEFT. ONE MAN TO GET RID OF. OLD MAN PIETRO! ARNOLD STOPPED BEFORE THE GREYING, AGED CARLO PIETRO'S DESK AND LOOKED DOWN AT THE GAUNT FIGURE.



MR. WILL YOU SEE ME IN MY OFFICE, MR. PIETRO? SAY TEN MINUTES?

WHY YES, SIR!

ARNOLD RETURNED TO HIS LUXURIOUS PRIVATE OFFICE. HE WAITED IMPATIENTLY FOR PIETRO'S SMOCK. AFTER A WHILE IT CAME. TWO THIN RAPS! ARNOLD BO HE ENTER.



YOU ... WANTED TO SEE MR. MR. EVERETTE?

YES, MR. PIETRO! COME IN! SIT DOWN!

THE WINKLED OLD MAN SAT DOWN NERVOUSLY? ARNOLD STUDIED HIM...NOTED HIS TREMLING BONEY HANDS...HIS GRIM SKULL-LIKE FACE...

I'VE INSTRUCTED THE CASHIER TO ISSUE YOU A CHECK FOR TWO WEEKS PAY IN ADVANCE, MR. PIETRO? I'M SORRY... BUT I'M FORCED TO LET YOU GO...



NO, PIETRO! IT'S NOT *THAT*! IT'S JUST THAT YOU'RE *TOO OLD*! I WANT ONLY *FOURTY* MEN WORKING FOR EVERETTE AND SON!

BUT, MR. EVERETTE! I'VE BEEN HERE *TWENTY YEARS*! I WORKED FOR YOUR FATHER BEFORE YOU!



THAT DOESN'T MATTER NOW! MY FATHER IS DEAD! THERE IS NO ROOM FOR SENTIMENT IN BUSINESS! I WANT NO ONE TO OLD MEN WORKING FOR ME! THEY'RE SLOW...TIRE EASILY...

PLEASE! I HAVE NO PLACE TO GO... NO ONE TO TURN TO!



ARNOLD TURNED AWAY FROM THE WRETCHED OLD MAN AND BLANDED INTO THE MIRROR! EXCEPT FOR A FEW WHITE LINES ACROSS HIS FOREHEAD, HE SCARCELY LOOKED HIS THIRTY-FIVE YEARS...

DON'T WORRY, CARLO! I'LL MAKE SURE I'M NOT DEPENDENT ON ANYONE WHEN THAT TIME COMES!



NO! THEY ARE ALL BACK IN *NAFFY*! I LEFT THEM TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO TO COME TO WORK IN AMERICA!

WELL, WHY NOT GO BACK TO THEM? A MAN YOUR AGE SHOULD RETIRE ANYWAY!

PERHAPS YOU ARE RIGHT! I ONLY HOPE THAT WHEN YOU ARE OLD, YOU ARE NOT TREATED THE SAME!



NOT WITH *MY* DOUGH, CARLO! BUT...I'M A *SMART* MAN! YOU CAN PICK UP YOUR CHECK ON THE WAY OUT! GOOD-BAY!

GOOD-BYE, MR. EVERETTE! PERHAPS YOUR LOVE OF YOUTH, AND *DOWN-TURN* FOR OLD ARE WILL CHANGE IN THE FUTURE! WE SHALL SEE!



CARLO PIETRO LEFT THE OFFICES OF EVERETTE AND SON AND NEVER RETURNED! ARNOLD HIRED A YOUNG MAN TO TAKE HIS PLACE, AND CARLO WAS SOON FORGOTTEN! BUT SEVERAL WEEKS LATER... IN NANTU... WHERE THE AGENT PIETRO HAD GONE...

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH F00000, OLD MAN? WHY DO YOU COME TO ME?



I WANT SOMETHING FOR ONE WHO LOVES NANTU TOO MUCH TO TEACH HIM A LESSON!



IT WAS ALMOST TWO MONTHS AFTER ARNOLD HAD FIRED CARLO PIETRO THAT THE SPY ARRIVED! ARNOLD SURVEYED IT ON THE REAR TERRACE OF HIS PALATIAL ESTATE...

WHAT IN THE WORLD COULD IT BE, JEEVES? IS THERE A RETURN ADDRESS?

YES, SIR! IT COMES FROM NANTU... A CARLO PIETRO SENT IT!



THE SPY STOOD ABOUT NEVER FEET HIGH! ARNOLD SCOWLED AT IT...

PIETRO? WELL, MIGHT AS WELL OPEN IT AND SEE WHAT IT IS!



JEEVES, THE BUTLER, FIRED THE BOMBS OF THE SPY LOOSE AND THEY FELL AWAY, REVEALING...

WHY IT'S A SMALL TREE. THERE'S A NOTE HANGING ON ONE OF ITS BRANCHES!



IT SAYS: DEAR MR. EVERETTE, IN MY NATIVE LAND THIS TREE IS WORSHIPPED BY THE UNEDUCATED! THEY BELIEVE THAT IT CAN ward OFF OLD AGE! SHOWING HOW MUCH YOU DESPISE THAT INEVITABLE STATE, I SEND THIS VARIETY OF OAK TO YOU! PERHAPS IT WILL HELP!



WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH IT, SIR? HOW IS BLAZES SHOULD I KNOW PLANT IT, I SUSPECT IT'S AN INTERESTING TYPE OF TREE IN ANY CASE! YES! PLANT IT!



AND SO, WHILE ARNOLD EVERETTE WATCHES, HIS SERVANT DUG A HOLE NEAR THE GARDEN WALL AND PLANTED THE WEIRD CHARLED OAK-TREE...



THAT'S A GOOD SPOT FOR IT! I CAN'T SEE IT FROM THE HOUSE, SO I WON'T BE REMUNDED OF THE ONLY THING...

A WEEK WENT BY? THE BURDEN OF WORK THAT HAD SEEMED SO HEAVY ON ARNOLD SEEMED LIGHTER, SOMEHOW? ARNOLD MOVED ABOUT EASILY, AND BEGAN TO FEEL MORE ENERGETIC...

GOOD MORNING, MR. EVERETTE! YOU'RE LOOKING WELL THIS MORNING!

I FEEL WELL THIS MORNING, JEDDY!



ARNOLD FOUND A DESIRE TO PLAY GOLF AGAIN. SOMETHING HE HADN'T DONE FOR YEARS...

GOOD SHOT, EVERETTE! RIGHT ON THE GREEN!

LONG! I HAVEN'T PLAYED LIKE THIS SINCE I WAS THIRTY!



EVER HE VISITS TO NIGHT CLUBS AND THEATERS WITH OLD FLAMES BEW MORE FREQUENT...

WHY, ARNOLD, YOU DEAR? YOU DANCE DIVINELY! THIS BRINGS BACK OLD MEMORIES... DOESN'T IT?

NOT SO OLD, HELEN? REMEMBER? THINK YOUNG... FEEL YOUNG!



THEN, ONE MORNING ARNOLD STARED INTO THE MIRROR...

THAT'S FUNNY! I USED TO HAVE WRINKLES ON MY FOREHEAD AND UNDER MY EYES! NOW THEY'RE GONE!



IT WAS THAT VERY SAME MORNING THAT ARNOLD SAW THE TREE? HE'D DECIDED TO WALK TO THE STATION AND HAD NOTICED IT AS HE PASSED THE GARDEN WALL...

WHY, EVEN THE TREE ITSELF SEEMED HE LOOKS YOUNGER? DOESN'T SEEM AS CROOKED AND SHARPER ANYMORE? AND THE LEAVES LOOK GREENER!



ARNOLD SMILED AND WALKED ON PAST? LIFE CERTAINLY WAS BRIGHT AND CHEERFUL LATELY! PROBABLY BEING SURROUNDED WITH YOUNG MEN AT THE OFFICE DID IT? THEN... SOME DAYS LATER...

WHMM! FACE DOESN'T LOOK BAD THIS MORNING! THINK I CAN SQUEEZE BY WITHOUT A SHAVE TODAY!



ARNOLD WAS WHISTLING A MERRY TUNE AS HE REARED THE GARDEN WALL. BUT THE TUNE GAVE TO A GUSH OF AIR THROUGH HIS LIPS AS HE SPIED THE TREE...

STRANGE! THE TREE SEEMS TO BE STRAIGHTENING UP! IT LOOKS... DIFFERENT! ALMOST... YOUNGER!



THE NEXT MORNING ARNOLD
DIDN'T HAVE TO SHAVE AGAIN! ON
THE FOLLOWING MORNING, FOR
THAT MATTER...



ARNOLD DIDN'T GO TO THE OFFICE
ONE DAY! HE'D MEANT TO, BUT A
STRANGE DESIRE TOOK HOLD OF
HIM! THE AFTERNOON FOUND HIM
IN THE BLEACHERS ALONG WITH
HUNDREDS OF TEEN-AGERS,
CHEERING FOR THE HOME TEAM...



IN FACT, ARNOLD NEVER WENT TO
THE OFFICE AGAIN! SOMEBODY
HE'D SUDDENLY LOST INTEREST



EXCEPT FOR THE CURIOUS FACT THAT HIS BEARD
HAD STOPPED GROWING AND HIS WHISKERS HAD
VANISHED, ARNOLD HAD NOT NOTICED THE HORRIBLE
CHANGE THAT WAS TAKING PLACE! IT WASN'T UNTIL
HIS TAILOR EXPLODED THAT HE REALIZED SOMETHING
WAS WRONG...



AND WHEN JEEVES ANNOUNCED THAT HE WAS LEAV-
ING... TERROR CREEPT INTO ARNOLD'S HEART...



ARNOLD LOCKED HIMSELF IN AFTER JEEVES LEFT! HE
WAS FORCED TO SEARCH THROUGH OLD THINGS IN THE
ATTIC FOR CLOTHES LONG SINCE PACKED AWAY TO
WEAR! CHILD'S CLOTHES...



ONE DAY, AS ARNOLD SCAMPERED ABOUT THE GAR-
DEN, HIS HOOP ROLLED OVER TO THE WALL! IT
STOPPED BEFORE A YOUNG, SLEEKLY SHAPED TREE A
SAWM...



IT WAS THE GNARLED OLD CROOKED TREE THAT CARLO PIETRO HAD SENT¹ NOW, IT STOOD FIRM AND STRAIGHT... REACHING TOWARD THE SUNLIGHT² ARNOLD STUDIED IT FOR A MOMENT, SCRATCHED HIS MOP OF UNCOMB HAIR... THEN SKIPPED AWAY...

OH, WELL³ ANOTHER TIME⁴ NOW I'VE GOT TO GO PLAY WITH MY SOLDIERS⁵



THE NEXT MORNING, ARNOLD TUMBLED OUT OF BED ONTO THE FLOOR⁶ HE TRIED TO GET UP⁷ SOMETHING WAS WRONG⁸ HIS SHORT STUBBY LEGS WOULDN'T RESPOND⁹ HE CRAWLED ALL THAT DAY...

MM...BROOKS¹⁰ WHERE ARE MA BROOKS¹¹ OH? HERE THEY ARE¹² COVER HERE...



NEAR THE GARDEN WALL, THE INFANT THAT ARNOLD HAD BECOME GAWLED AFTER AN INTERESTING LITTLE INSECT¹³ HE STOPPED BEFORE A YOUNG GREEN SAGEO, SPRINGING FROM THE SOFT RICH EARTH...

PRETTY FLOWER¹⁴ SEE PRETTY FLOWER¹⁵



THAT NIGHT THE DESERTED HOUSE OF ARNOLD EVERETTE WAS FILLED WITH THE SQUALLING HOWLS OF A HUNGRY BABY...CRYING FOR ITS BOTTLE...

A-WAH... A-WAH... A-WAH... HIC... A-WAH...



TOWARD MORNING, THE SCREAMS HAD CHANGED TO THE FAINT BURLLES AND CRIES OF A NEW-BORN BABE...



AND SOON AS EVER THOSE CRIES DIED AWAY¹⁶ AS THE MORNING SUN STREAMED OVER THE GARDEN WALL... A BOLDEN RAY SHOT DOWNWARD TOWARD THE SPOT WHERE ARNOLD EVERETTE...SEVERAL MONTHS BEFORE...HAD PLANTED CARLO PIETRO'S GNARLED AND CROOKED TREE¹⁷ THEN, ON A BARE SPOT OF BLACK EARTH, LAY A SINGLE OBJECT...AN **ADORN**¹⁸



HEH, HEH¹⁹ WELL, DIDDIE²⁰ I HOPE YOU **SEED ON POINT** OF THIS WHOLE LITTLE TALE²¹ WHICH IS **FORGET** SHOWING OLD OR GROWING **FOUNT**²² ARNOLD CAN'T HELP YOU! HE'S JUST A **BEAN**...OF SUNLIGHT...NOW DON'T FORGET TO READ MY COLUMN, **THE DRIFT-KEEPER'S CORNER**, FOR BACK

ISSUES. INFO²³ NOW I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THAT **HAG**. **THE OLD WITCH**²⁴ SHE! DON'T FORGET! OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES...HEH, HEH²⁵



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! YEP, IT'S ME... *THE OLD WITCH*... MISTRESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR! THIS TIME, FOR THE OFFERING FROM MY CAULDRON, I'VE DRESSED UP A TALE TOLD TO ME BY LARRY DOUGLAS, A THEATRICAL MAN! IT'S IN HIS OWN WORDS, AND HE CALLS IT...

"The Ventriloquist's Dummy!"



IT HAD BEEN YEARS SINCE I'D SEEN CHARLES JEROME! AS I STUDIED HIS PALE, DRAWN FACE I WAS SHOCKED TO SEE HOW MUCH HE'D CHANGED! HIS WARM SMILE HAD DISAPPEARED... IN ITS PLACE WAS A TIGHT GRIMACE! HIS EYES THAT ONCE SPARKLED HAPPILY WERE SAD AND BLOODSHOT, ENCIRCLED BY TIRED LINES.

CHARLES! YOU OLD SON-OF-A-GUN! HOW ARE YOU? I'VE BEEN LOOKING HIGH AND LOW FOR YOU!

LARRY! LARRY DOUGLAS! COME IN! COME IN!



CHARLES STEPPED BACK AND I ENTERED HIS HOTEL ROOM. I LOOKED AROUND. THE PLACE WAS BARE EXCEPT FOR AN IRON BED AND A BROKEN CHEST OF DRAWERS. I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES...

HOW DID YOU FIND ME, LARRY?

YOUR OLD AGENT TOLD ME WHERE YOU WERE LIVING. I... I DON'T KNOW THOSE WERE SO BAD WITH YOU, CHARLES!



CHARLES MOOSED. I LOOKED AT HIS HAND. HIS LEFT HAND. THE HAND HE'D USED TO MANIPULATE HIS DUMMY...

RETIRED? YES? YOU CAN CALL IT THAT!

IF YOU'RE RETIRED, WHY DO YOU STILL KEEP YOUR HAND SLEAVED?



CHARLES ALWAYS KEPT HIS 'DUMMY HAND' ENCASED IN A BEASTY WOOLLEN MITTEN. I REMEMBERED NOW I'D RUBBED HIM ABOUT IT...

JUST FORCE OF HABIT I GUESS!

TELL ME, CHARLES, DO YOU STILL HAVE MORTY, YOUR DUMMY?



CHARLES JEROME HAD BEEN A FAMOUS VERTIGO-DUINIST TEN YEARS BEFORE. HE'D BEEN A STAR. HIS ACT HAD BEEN FANTASTIC. HIS DUMMY HAD BEEN SO LIFE-LIKE. NO ONE HAD EVER SEEN HIS LIPS MOVE. HE'D BEEN ACCLAIMED BY AUDIENCES WHEREVER HE'D PERFORMED...

I AM NOT WORKING ANYMORE, LARRY!

YES! YOUR AGENT TOLD ME HE SAID YOU REFUSED ALL OFFERS! HE SAID YOU'D RETIRED...



CHARLES STARED AT ME FOR A MOMENT. THEN HIS BLANCE SHOT ACROSS THE ROOM TO A BATTERED SUITCASE IN THE CORNER...

OH! YES. I SEE! I THOUGHT SO! NOW HERE, THE...

DON'T TOUCH THAT SUITCASE!



I STOPPED IN MY TRACKS. CHARLES'S VOICE HAD A WILD PRINTERED RING IN IT.

COURSE NOT, CHARLES. IF YOU'D RATHER I WOULDNT NOW LET'S GET DOWN TO BUSINESS. I'VE COME TO OFFER YOU A JOB!



A JOB? BUT, I TOLD YOU! I'M NOT WORKING ANYMORE!

LOOK, CHARLES. I'M THE ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR FOR A NEW RESORT HOTEL IN THE MOUNTAINS. THIS CAN MEAN A LOT TO YOU. IT CAN PUT YOU BACK ON TOP IF THEY LIKE YOU. WHAT DO YOU SAY? I HAVE A SPOT FOR YOU NEXT WEEKEND!

NO! I WON'T DO IT! I'M THROUGH PERFORMING THROUGH!



AS I DROVE BACK UPSTATE, I KEPT THINKING OF CHARLES JEROME! HE'D FALLEN A LONG WAY! I REMEMBERED BACK TO THOSE YEARS WHEN HE'D THRILLED AUDIENCES... HAD THEM HOLLERING IN THE AISLES...



YOU WERE GREAT TONIGHT CHARLES!

YOU MEAN **WORTHY** HERE WAS GREAT, LARRY?

CHARLES'S ALWAYS REFERRED TO WORTHY AS THOUGH IT WERE A REAL PERSON! CERTAINLY THE DUNNIE BEHAVED THAT WAY! IT WAS THE INCREDIBLE WAY CHARLES USED TO MANIPULATE IT! AND, ALTHOUGH I USED TO THINK IT WAS JUST A PUBLICITY STUNT, CHARLES'S GUARDED THE MANIPULATING HAND WELL.



WHY DO YOU ALWAYS WEAR THAT **HEAVY WOOLLEN HITTER**, CHARLES?

MY **HARD** IS MY FORTUNE! I'VE GOT TO PROTECT IT!

I'D BEEN CHARLES'S AGENT BACK IN THOSE YEARS! WHEN I'D NOTTEN AN OFFER OUT IN HOLLYWOOD, I'D SOLD HIS ACCOUNT! THAT WAS THE LAST I'D HEAR OF HIM, ALTHOUGH I'D FOLLOWED HIS DAREM IN THE **THEATRE PAPERS**...

HMM! WHAT'S THAT CHARLES JEROME LEAVES SHOW AFTER MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF DANCER ON SAME BILL?



IT'D BEEN AFTER THAT UNEXPLAINED DEATH THAT CHARLES HAD BEGUN HIS DOWNWARD SLIDE! THE GIRL HAD BEEN ATTACKED, IT SEEMED, BY A HOARD OF **RATS**...

NOTHING ELSE COULD HAVE RIPPED HER UP LIKE THAT EXCEPT SMALL SHARP-TOOTHED ANIMALS, SUCH AS... **RATS!**



I'D HEARD LITTLE ABOUT HIM AFTER THAT! THEN, WHEN I'D TAKEN THE JOB AS ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR FOR THE WHITE LANE HOTEL...

WE WANT TOP-NOTCH, OUT-OF-THE-ORDINARY TALENT, LARRY!

I THINK I KNOW **ONE** ACT YOU'LL LIKE!



I'D BOOKED THE ACTS I'D NEEDED AND THEN LOOKED UP CHARLES! NOW I WAS DRIVING BACK TO THE HOTEL, THE SPOT STILL OPEN FOR THE NEXT WEEKEND...

WATER HE'LL CHANGE HIS MIND! I'LL GIVE HIM A LITTLE TIME TO THINK IT OVER!



I WAS SO BUSY THE NEXT FEW DAYS PLANNING THE MID-WEEK SHOWS THAT I COMPLETELY FORGOT ABOUT CHARLES JEROME! THEN ON FRIDAY MORNING, I LOOKED UP FROM MY DESK TO SEE...

CHARLES! YOU DID COME! I'M SO HAPPY!

I HOPE THE SPOT IS STILL OPEN, LARRY!



THERE WAS A STRANGE LOOK IN CHARLES'S EYES AS HE STOOD BEFORE MY DESK. HE SEEMED TO BE STARRING RIGHT THROUGH ME.

OF COURSE, CHARLES! THE SPOT IS FINE! I'LL ARRANGE FOR YOUR ROOM!

THAT'S GOOD OF YOU, LARRY!



CHARLES'S WITHERED HAND RANG AT HIS SIDE. IN HIS OTHER HAND HE CLUTCHED THE SUITCASE CONTAINING MORTY... HIS DUMMY.

WHAT MADE YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND, CHARLES?

WHY...I JUST DECIDED TO COME OUT OF RETIREMENT. THAT'S ALL!



A BELL-HOP BROCKED AND ENTERED.

TAKE MR. JEROME TO THE ENTER-TAINERS' COTTAGE, JOE! SINE HAS A NICE ROOM!

YES, SIR! NIGHT THIS MORN, SIR!



I WATCHED OUT OF MY OFFICE WINDOW IN THE RECREATION HALL AS CHARLES MOVED DOWN THE WALKWAY, HIS SUITCASE, FOLLOWING THE BELL-HOP. HIS FEET SEEMED TO DRAG...AND HE STAGGERED A LITTLE...

POOR FELLOW! PROBABLY TOOK A FEW SHOTS OF WHISKY TO BOLSTER HIMSELF. AH, HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT, JUST AS SOON AS THE CURTAIN OPENS!



THAT NIGHT, SINCE IT WAS A WEEKEND, THE RECREATION HALL WAS JAMMED! THE SHOW MOVED ALONG SMOOTHLY! THEN IT CAME TIME FOR CHARLES'S ACT! I SAW HIM STANDING IN THE WINGS HOLDING MORTY... HIS FAMILIAR DUMMY...AS THE ANNOUNCER INTRODUCED HIM...

AND NOW...FOR HIS FIRST PERFORMANCE ANYWHERE AFTER TEN YEARS OF RETIREMENT...THE WORLD FAMOUS VENTRILOQUIST...MISTER CHARLES JEROME...AND MORTY!



CHARLES CAME OUT ON THE STAGE WITH MORTY BEATED IN THE CROOK OF HIS RIGHT ARM! THERE WAS SOME SCATTERED APPLAUSE FROM THOSE WHO REMEMBERED THE GREAT MAN IN HIS PRIME! MORTY BEGAN TO EYE THE AUDIENCE, LOOKING FROM FACE TO FACE...



WENT HE CUTE?

HE LOOKS SO REAL!

LIKE A LIVE BOY!

SUDDENLY MORTY STOPPED! HIS GLANCE HAD FALLEN UPON A RATHER ATTRACTIVE YOUNG WOMAN SEATED NEAR BY! HE WHISPERED SLILY...AND QUINNED...



I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW, MORTY...AFTER THE SHOW!

IT WAS THE PERFECT THING TO SAY! THE AUDIENCE HOWLED! YOU KNOW THE CROWD THAT FREQUENTS A RESORT LIKE THAT: WOMEN ON VACATIONS LOOKING FOR RICH HUSBANDS MEN HUNTING FOR WEALTHY WIVES! IT ALWAYS ENDS UP LIKE A RAT-RACE, WITH EVERYONE LYING TO EVERYONE ELSE! ANYWAY...THEY LOVED CHARLES AND HIS DUMBY.

SO MR JEROME? YOU ENJOY A BETTER WAY TO STUDY ASTRONOMY?

HAW, HAW!

THEY'RE A SCREAM!

AFTER THE SHOW, I WENT BACKSTAGE TO CONGRATULATE CHARLES ON HIS WONDERFUL PERFORMANCE! HE'D OUTDONE HIMSELF! HE'D MANIPULATED MORTY BETTER THAN EVER BEFORE...

MR JEROME? WHY, HE LEFT THE HALL AS SOON AS HE CAME OFF-STAGE?

OH! HE MUST HAVE GONE ON BACK TO THE ENTERTAINERS' COTTAGE!

I MOVED DOWN THE WALK TO THE COTTAGE! BACK AT THE HALL, THE GUESTS WERE POURING OUT OF THE EXITS THEIR LAUGHTER DRIFTING ACROSS THE NIGHT AIR TOWARD ME! I COULD HEAR CHARLES'S NAME REFERRED TO IN THE GABBLE OF CONVERSATION.

THEY LIKED HIM!

THE COTTAGE DOOR SLAMMED BEHIND ME AND SILENCE CLOSED IN AS I STOOD IN THE SEMI-DARKNESS! I SAZED DOWN THE CORRIDOR AT THE SIX DOORS...

NOW, WHICH ONE IS CHARLES'S?

SUDDENLY, THE SILENCE FROZE IN MY VEINS! VOICES EXPLODED FROM BEHIND ONE OF THE DOORS! LOUD VOICES HEARD WITH ANGER! CHARLES, USING HIS NORMAL VOICE, WAS ARGUING WITH HIMSELF! USING MORTY'S VOICE...

NO! I HEARD! YES YOU WILL! I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU! MAKE YOU! YOU'RE TOO WEAK TO STOP ME!

I STOOD OUTSIDE THE DOOR FOR A MOMENT LISTENING TO THE BAVING.

GOOD LORD! HE'S OUT OF HIS MIND! HE'S FIGHTING WITH THAT DUMBY OF HIS OVER THE GIRL IN THE AUDIENCE!

I SHOOK! THE TELLING STOPPED ABRUPTLY! I HEARD A SHORT WHIMPER AND THEN CHARLES OPENED THE DOOR! HIS EYES WERE RED AS THOUGH HE'D BEEN CRYING.

I...I WANTED TO CONGRATULATE YOU, CHARLES! THE AUDIENCE LOVED YOU!

TH...THANK YOU, LARRY! I...I'M TIRED! I MUST GO TO BED NOW... SO I WON'T INVITE YOU IN!

CHARLES CLOSED THE DOOR, AND I STOOD THERE FEELING FOOLISH! I SHRUGGED AND RETURNED TO THE 'RED' HALL! THERE WAS SOME WORK I HAD TO DO BEFORE I COULD GO TO BED! LATER AS I SAT AT MY DESK...

WHAT WAS THAT?

SCREEEEEEEEHHHHH!



IT WAS THE SAME WOMAN THAT CHARLES'D HAD MOSTLY DUFF TO! I THOUGHT OF THE DANGER THAT HAD DIED THE SAME WAY TEN YEARS BEFORE! I RUSHED TO THE COTTAGE AND FLUNG OPEN CHARLES'S DOOR...

CHARLES! HE HE'S DEAD!



THE SUITCASE CONTAINING CHARLES'S DUMMY SAT ON THE FLOOR IN THE CORNER! I MOVED TOWARD IT! I HAD TO SEE! I THREW BACK THE LID...

WHAT THE...? THE DUMMY HAD NO HEAD!



I STARED DOWN AT THE HEADLESS VENTRILOQUIST'S DUMMY! I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT! THEN I SAW OTHER THINGS IN THE SUITCASE...

MAKE-UP! THE SUITCASE HAD MAKE-UP IN IT!



A SHOUT FROM THE HOTEL KITCHEN DREW MY ATTENTION! I RUSHED ACROSS THE GRASS AND ONTO THE PORCH! THE CHEF STOOD WIDE-EYED... WAIVING HIS HAND...

WHAT HAPPENED?

HE TAKE MY CLEAVER! HE STEAL MY CLEAVER! THAT VENTRILOQUIST!



I LOOKED AROUND! A BUTTER LAY ON THE FLOOR BY MY FEET! I PICKED IT UP! IT WAS COVERED WITH BLOOD! SUDDENLY I HEARD CHARLES'S VOICE COMING FROM BEHIND SOME BUSHES...

CHARLES!

I'M GOING TO GET RID OF YOU... ONCE AND FOR ALL YOU... HYDRAE FLEET! YOU LITTLE BEAST!



AS I RUSHED TOWARD THE BUSHES, I HEARD MORTY'S VOICE... SHOUTING, SCREAMING! THEN A CRAWLING SENSATION STARTED UP MY SPINE! THE VOICES OVERLAPPED! THERE WERE TWO HANDS...

AS I BURST AMONG THE BUSH, I CAUGHT SIGHT OF A GLEAM OF STEEL IN THE BLACKNESS! CHARLES STOOD OVER A TREE STUMP, HIS LEFT FOREARM PRESSED ON ITS FLAT TOP! AND HE WAS BRANDING THE CLEAVER DOWN UPON IT...

MORTY'S SCREAM WAS CUT SHORT AS THE CLEAVER FELL! A NAUSEATING FRAMED HEAD... SHRIVELED AND UGLY... ROLLED TO MY FEET

NOT DON'T, CHARLES! DON'T!

IT'S NO USE! I'M FREEZING MYSELF FOR GOOD!

NO! NO! EEEEEE!

I'M AID OF YOU! AID OF YOU!

OH, MY GOD!

CHARLES PITCHED FORWARD AND FELL! HIS LEFT HAND HAD BEEN SEVERED AT THE WRIST! NOW I KNEW WHY HE'D ALWAYS WORN THE GLOVES! INSTEAD OF A LEFT HAND, A HORRIBLE HEAD HAD GROWN FROM HIS WRIST...

I... I HAD TO DO IT, LARRY! TEN YEARS AGO HE FILLED THAT DANGER! HE TOOK OVER MY BODY AND KILLED HER!

YOU'RE BLEEDING, CHARLES! I'VE GOT TO GET YOU A DOCTOR!

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, THEY SAID I HAD A DEFORMED HAND! BUT AS I GROW UP THAT HORRIBLE HEAD DEVELOPED! SOON IT OPENED ITS WICKED EYES AND BEGAN TO TALK! I BECAME A VENTRILOQUIST... USED IT AS A PUPPET!

THAT EXPLAINS THE REALISTIC MOVEMENTS MORTY HAD!

THEN IT BEGAN TO WHIST CONTROL OF MY BODY WHILE I SLEPT! I HAD TO RETIRE FROM SHOW BUSINESS! I KEPT THE HEAD SILENT! BUT YOU YOU CAME... AND OFFERED ME WORK! TOMORROW, IT TOOK OVER AGAIN! I COULDN'T STOP IT!

I... I...

I'LL GO FOR THE DOCTOR, CHARLES! I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!

I TIES A CRUDE TOWNLIGHT ON CHARLES'S WRIST AND RUSHED OFF! WHEN I GOT BACK, CHARLES WAS DEAD! HE'D BEEN FORN TO JARRED! THE SEVERED HEAD LAY NEARBY...

THE HEAD WASN'T QUITE DEAD! WITH ITS LAST THREAD OF LIFE, IT ATTACKED CHARLES! THEY'VE DESTROYED EACH OTHER!

HEL, HEL! WELL, THAT'S THE TALK LARRY PALMED OFF ON ME! SO I JUST HANDED IT DOWN TO YOU! I HOPE YOU LIKED IT! NEXT TIME YOU SEE A VENTRILOQUIST, LOOK CAREFULLY TO SEE HOW HE HOLDS HIS DUMMY! IF HE'S READING IN TOO FAR, BEWARE! WELL, WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THE HAPPIEST OF HORROR! DON'T FORGET TO READ THE GIFT

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